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## VARIATIONS IN THE PRONUNCIATION OF FRENCH\*

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The few remarks I shall make about the various pronunciations of certain French words will deal exclusively with normal French such as we all teach. Although I shall glean my illustrations from points of the French territory often far apart from each other, I shall not touch upon the difficult subject of dialects, but shall confine myself to that portion of the people who intend to speak good French. Neither shall I treat of accent, but shall consider only individual sounds or words. Perhaps this needs a word of explanation. Given four fairly well-educated persons having learned at school the same kind of French; one from Paris, one from Marseille, one from Caen in Normandy, and one from Tournay in the Walloon part of Belgium. Supposing that they have never left their respective native towns for any length of time, if we let them read a simple passage or utter a few familiar sentences, the same for all four, we shall in all probability detect enough difference in their pronunciation to enable us to say approximately from what part of the French-speaking territory each one comes. We might say, in the present instance, that the Walloon's utterance was comparatively heavy, somewhat drawled, and on the "sing-song" order; while that of the Parisian was clear-cut, crisp, and vivacious; and similarly for the others. Yet all four used the same words and pronounced them, taken separately as single words, exactly alike. Whence, then, came the difference in the general effect produced on the listener? For want of a better word, I should say that it was due to accent—a much more subtle matter to define than mere divergence in the pronunciation of individual sounds; for it depends on pitch, voice-quality, sentence-stress, and other factors, which in turn depend upon racial characteristics, personal idiosyncrasies, influence of neighboring tongues, etc. All this comes out much more strongly

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in the utterance of whole sentences than in separate words. This accent could probably be determined, analyzed into its component parts; although I do not know that it has as yet been done. But what I am trying to convey is that divergence in the pronunciation of words or single sounds forms but a small part of the accent. The true pronunciation of words may be learned by anyone, no matter where he lives; an accent is acquired only on the spot or by personal contact with one who has it naturally. Every region has its own accent, good, bad, or merely tolerable. The only good French accent is to be found in Paris, and it can be acquired only in Paris or from Parisians, or perhaps through the medium of the phonograph.

Leaving this element out of the question, we may say that there is today only one French language taught in the same manner all over France, Switzerland, Belgium, and the French colonies or former colonies, the standard being everywhere the same; but that there are a number of words and a few sounds the pronunciation of which varies slightly from one city to another, and even among the inhabitants of the same city. The causes of this divergence are in the main the following :

1. The importance of Paris as the political, intellectual, and artistic center of France has imposed the pronunciation of that city, as it has imposed its fashions, on the rest of the French-speaking world; but, as the copied *article de luxe* always lacks the something inexpressible, commonly called Parisian *chic*, so the pronunciation of Paris by non-Parisians lacks the particular flavor found only in the true Parisians.

2. Fashions change frequently, and so does the Paris pronunciation, though less often than the cut of clothes. Now, the provinces, being temperamentally more conservative, have not always kept pace with the capital; hence we find in provincial towns some pronunciations which are correct, but slightly archaic, though not exactly inaccurate or dialectic.

3. Orthoepists, grammarians, and lexicographers have not always been willing to concede the absolute supremacy of Paris in matters of language usage. Littré is one of those who are prone to condemn too pronounced Parisianisms and to teach pro-

nunciations which are dead or dying. Such authorities are listened to more willingly in the provinces, where people are perhaps always more or less conscious of their shortcomings; and this explains the fact that some words are pronounced at many points of the French territory and by old people in Paris in a manner no longer approved by or familiar to the younger generations of Parisians.

4. Orthography is no less potent a cause of divergence in pronunciation. Many words are very often written and printed, though seldom used in conversation. Such, for instance, is *gageure*, now generally replaced by *pari*. Often these words are met with for the first time after people have left school, when reading becomes more extensive and varied. The traditional pronunciation being lost, the majority of people will pronounce these words as they are written, or will get their pronunciation from others perhaps no better informed. The usage of one public speaker may become that of a whole district, and the orator may have used the wrong pronunciation. Proper names are often subjected to such ill treatment. Thus *Montaigne* is now generally pronounced *Montègne*, owing to the sixteenth-century spelling of that name with *ai*. Foreign words are still more exposed to a similar fate; with them the law in Paris is that of least resistance: the foreign word is simply frenchified with true Parisian breeziness. Not so in the provinces; your provincial is either more conscientious or more timid, and will usually try to give the foreign word a sound nearer the one which it has in the language from which it was taken.

5. Finally we must make allowance for the personal element. Words may be pronounced differently by people born and reared in the same street, and even by the same person at different ages or in different moods. Abbé Rousselot says:

I do not know a single word which has the same pronunciation for all French readers. . . . The quality of the vowels varies according to regions, sometimes in the same place from person to person, according to the place the word occupies in the sentence. . . . I have heard Parisians pronounce *tête* with short close *e* before another word and with short open *e* at the end of a sentence.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Revue des patois gallo-romans*, Vol. I, p. 11.

Professor Koschwitz, of Marburg, has made detailed observations as to the local peculiarities of pronunciation in various parts of France. The results of his investigation are published in the seventh supplement of the *Zeitschrift für französische Sprache und Litteratur*. Everyone is familiar with the same writer's *Les parlers parisiens*. Most of my illustrations are drawn from these two works, although several others dealing with the subject of orthoepy have been consulted. Owing to lack of time, I can consider only a few cases of divergence, and shall limit myself to certain words containing the vowels *a*, *e*, *o*, the digraphs *ai*, *oi*, *ui*, and the nasal vowels. One or two consonants will also be considered.

Rousselot distinguishes mainly three kinds of *a*, which he calls medium or neuter *a*, as in *la*, *tu as*, *casque*, *albe*, *lac*, etc.; open *a* (*à*), leaning toward *e*, as in *car*, *char*, *part*, *parisien*, which many people do not distinguish from the medium *a* and which is lacking in many parts of France, though common in Paris; close or deep *a* (*â*), tending toward open *o*. This is likewise lacking in certain portions of the country, especially in the south, where most *a*'s are open or clear. In Canada, on the contrary, all *a*'s have become very close or deep. The distinction of medium, open, and close applies to all other vowels as well. Besides this, they may be long, short, or semi-long.

In *tu as*, *tu viendras*, *tu tombas*, *il a*, etc., so then mainly in the first, second, and third person present indicative of *avoir*, in the second and third person of the preterite and future, the Genevese and Lyonese use close or deep *a*, while the Parisians use medium *a*, although close *a* is heard also in Paris.

In *allâmes*, *allâtes*, and *qu'il allât*, Ploetz<sup>2</sup> states that *a* is pronounced by many long and by some short, but that it is of little concern which *a* one uses; a view in which Koschwitz concurs.

The termination *-ation* in words like *nation*, *ovation*, is frequently heard with long-deep *a* in Paris whenever the word has the sentence-stress. This is the usual pronunciation of the Paris *gamin*. When less stressed, *a* is semi-long; but frequently even in Paris a short *a* is heard, and this is the regular pronuncia-

<sup>2</sup> *Systematische Darstellung der französischen Aussprache* (Berlin, 1897).

tion of those words in Lyons, Provence, Languedoc, Gascony, Picardy, and Belgium. Rousselot says that the *a* in such words varies from short-medium to long-close or deep *a*, but that the best Parisian usage demands it with short-close or deep *a*.

The group *asse*, either at the end or in the body of words, like *passee*, *passer*, *passage*, offers considerable difficulty. Here orthoepists do not agree, and usage varies in the various parts of the country. Sachs<sup>3</sup> prescribes semi-long open or clear *a* for all such words: *pàsser*, *pàssage*, *làsser*, *damàsser*, *échàsse*. In Lyons two persons were tested, one of whom pronounced *pàsser*, *pàssage*, *làsser*, *damàsser* but *échàsse*; the other, *pàsser*, *pàssage*, *lasser*, (medium *a*), *damàsser*, *échàsse*. The two persons questioned in Geneva also varied between open and close *a* without any consistency. In Paris the same lack of stability is observed. The conclusion then is that no rule can here consistently be established.

The ending *able* is no less disputed. Plud'hun in *Parlons Français*, a little treatise on pronunciation intended for the Swiss, says: "*sable*, *diable*, and *fable* are always pronounced with short *a* in Geneva;" but Koschwitz maintains that he always heard those words with a deep *a* rather long. In the words *agréable*, *durable*, and *table* the Genevese use long *a*; Plud'hun demands a rather short *a*. Witnesses gave for Lyons *sâble*, *diâble*, *jâble* (with long-deep *a*), as recommended by Ploetz, Lesaint,<sup>4</sup> and Thurot.<sup>5</sup> Littré<sup>6</sup> and Sachs<sup>7</sup> call this antiquated and recommend a semi-long *a*. The adjectives *agréable*, *durable*, the nouns *érable* and *table*, had in Lyons semi-long deep *a*. In Paris we find *sable*, *diable*, *fable* with long-deep *a*, *agréable* with medium-deep *a*, *durable* with open *a*, *table* with medium-deep *a*. However, in conversation, where the ending is often abbreviated to *-ab'* the *a* becomes short and open. Where the word has the

<sup>3</sup> *Encyclopädisches Wörterbuch der französischen und deutschen Sprache* (Berlin, 1902).

<sup>4</sup> *Traité complet de la prononciation française* (Halle, 1890).

<sup>5</sup> *De la prononciation française depuis le commencement du XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle*; 2 vols. (Paris, 1881-83).

<sup>6</sup> *Dictionnaire*.

<sup>7</sup> *Op. cit.*

stress, even the adjective has deep *a*. It is this difference, due to stressed and unstressed position, which is the probable cause of the disagreement among orthoepists.

For *damner*, *damnation*, the pronunciation heard in Paris is with both open and close *a* in the stem, the close *a* being that recommended by Rousselot; as for *condamner*, only deep *a* was heard by Koschwitz in Paris. In Lyons pretty near the same condition obtains; in Marseille and Tours, only open or clear *a* was heard; in Caen, only close or deep *a*. Sachs demands *dà-mner*; Lesaint, long *a* without indication of quality; the Academy is silent on the subject. Again it is impossible to formulate a rule, since usage varies widely.

*Accabler* is pronounced with long-deep *a* in Paris, according to Koschwitz, Rousselot,<sup>8</sup> and Hatzfeld;<sup>9</sup> but Rousselot adds that even in Paris we frequently hear medium *a*, probably in the mouth of provincials. Sachs prescribes open *a*, which is the pronunciation of Geneva (without exception), Lyons (where, however, the Parisian medium *a* is also heard), and Tours, Montpellier, Caen, and Amiens agree with Paris. In the northeast the *a* is deep and long, in accordance with the general tendency of that region.

In *baron*, *marron*, *carré*, *carreau*, the south uses generally open or clear *a*; the center, medium *a*; and the north, including Paris, deep *a*. In Geneva no uniform rule exists for these words, although open *a* seems to be preferred.

*Il bat* and *combat* should have deep semi-long *a* according to most orthoepists. In Geneva a short open *a* is common. In most of the Walloon regions a very deep *a* prevails, though this is considered incorrect.

For *acclamer* Littré and Sachs recommend short open *a*; Hatzfeld, semi-long open *a*. But in Lyons and Paris, and doubtless elsewhere, a deep *a* is frequently heard.

It is wrong, according to Koschwitz, to prescribe a deep *a* for *flamme*, as nearly all orthoepists do. Ploetz noticed that on the stage this word had always deep-long *a* in the figurative meaning

<sup>8</sup> *Précis de prononciation française* (Paris, 1902).

<sup>9</sup> *Dictionnaire*.

of "love," while in its ordinary meaning it was given either long or short *a*. The same distinction seems to be made everywhere. In Paris the best-educated people hesitate between long-deep and semi-long medium *a*.

Let us now leave *a* and see what is the fate of *e*. In *atelier*, *aqueduc*, *lourdement*, *Charlemagne*, and *parce que*, words in which *e* is generally dropped in Geneva, it should be pronounced according to Plud'hun; Koschwitz grants this only for *atelier*, *Charlemagne*, and *lourdement*, although even in these words a pause may take the place of *e*. In many regions *atelier* is popularly pronounced *ati-yé*. For *aqueduc* the pronunciation in Geneva, Lyons, and Paris is without exception *akduc*. *Parce que* is generally pronounced *parske*, which offers no more phonetic difficulty than *lorsque*. A general rule for mute *e* is impossible. In the south of France there is a strong tendency to pronounce all mute *e*'s both in the body and at the end of words, whereas the north is inclined to suppress them everywhere—a process in which Paris has perhaps gone farthest, at least farther than Geneva. This seems in accord with the familiar rule that Latin unstressed *a* has become mute *e* (often not pronounced, as, e. g., in *rose*), in the northern Romance dialects, whereas in the southern, Provençal, Spanish, Italian, this *a* has persisted. Curiously enough in Belgium the mute *e* in the body and at the end of words is sounded; thus we hear in that region *Genève*, *venir*, where Frenchmen would say *G'nève*, *v'nir*.

The pronunciation of *les*, *des*, *mes*, *tes*, *ses* has been a favorite topic with all orthoepists for centuries. For modern times Littré, Thurot, Lesaint, Sachs, and Ploetz agree in the main in prescribing open *e* for these words. Koschwitz (in his grammar) did the same, but his confidence was shaken when he found that Clédât, in his *Précis d'orthographe et de grammaire phonétique* (1890), recommends *lé*, *dé*, *mé*, etc., in all cases. Legouvé, in his *Art de la lecture*, states that in conversation close *e* is used, and that young people say constantly: "*Prends donc tés livres.*" On investigation, Koschwitz found that at Geneva they use generally *lé*, *té*, etc.; at Lyons, without exception, *lé*, *té*, *dé*, etc.; at Marseille, without exception the same close *e*; at Vaucluse, close



*e*; at Montpellier, and Bordeaux, close *e*; at Tours, a semi-open *e* when alone, but close *e* before consonants in conversation; at Caen, generally close *e*; at Amiens, always close *e*. I shall add for Belgium close *e* in the Walloon region, while the Flemings use generally open *e*; but let us remember that the latter learn French as a foreign language, and are therefore less under dialectic influence.

In Paris actors are taught a pronunciation with open *e*. Dupont-Vernon, the well-known actor and professor of elocution, says in his *Art de bien dire*: "Prononcez comme s'il y avait è dans les mots d'une syllabe les, mes, des, tes, ses: je demanderais même que pour ces mots l'accent fût figuré dans le dictionnaire, car presque tout le monde les prononce avec l'accent aigu, et c'est une habitude déplorable." There is no dissenting voice among actors and their teachers. Among scholars and orators it will be found that in conversation most of them use a close *e*, while in public speaking the tendency is toward open *e*. The lower classes of Paris use only close *e* for speaking, reciting, and reading. Our conclusion, then, would be that the best usage demands a conventional open *e*, especially for public utterances, but that the majority of French people use close *e*, which may eventually be prescribed. Rousselot remarks: "les, des, ces, ces ont régulièrement des *e* fermés; l'*e* ouvert est introduit par l'enseignement."

The words *hennir* and *nenni*, which according to the older orthoepists, and even according to Rousselot, should be pronounced *anir* and *nani*, are more and more commonly pronounced *ènir* and *nèni*. This is for *hennir* the case, for cultured and uncultured alike, at Lyons, Marseille, Montpellier, Tours, Paris, and Caen. *Anir* only was heard by Koschwitz at Bordeaux and Amiens. Thurot says: "Cette prononciation (*anir*) est tombée en désuétude." The Academy makes no recommendation in the last edition of its dictionary. *Nenni* is pronounced *nèni* at Lyons, Tours, Paris, Geneva, and in Belgium, in the Walloon provinces.

For *enivrer*, *enorgueillir*, the orthoepists teach a pronunciation with nasal *a*, but the words are also pronounced with *ène*. The confusion seems indeed so great that Koschwitz concludes

that the rules given are merely theoretic, since everybody pronounces as he pleases. In Paris, Marseille, Tours, Amiens, and Caen both forms are heard. The same uncertainty prevails for *anoblir*; but here it seems that either Koschwitz or his witnesses have failed to distinguish between *anoblir* ("raise to the peerage") and *ennoblir* ("exalt," "dignify"). The divergence can apply only to *ennoblir*. Koschwitz does not seem to have met with the forms *énivrer*, *énorgueillir*, which I know to be in use. I found recently *énorgueillir* in a poem by Jules Gros,<sup>10</sup> a Swiss from the canton of Vaud, whose use of French is normal in all other respects.

Littré and Sachs recommend the pronunciation *indämnnité* and *indmänniser*, for *indemnité*, *indemniser*, while others prescribe *indènnité*, etc. Ploetz remarks that the latter is becoming more fashionable. Koschwitz' witnesses were about evenly divided on that point; he concludes, however, that the more modern *indènnité* should be preferred.

Final close *é* is often lengthened in the Walloon provinces of Belgium, where *donné*, *bonté*, become *donnée*, *bontée*. In the Flemish part of the country this *é* is often diphthongized to *ey*, but this is considered vulgar.

We may leave the vowel *e* with Rousselot's remark:

The quality of *e* varies enormously with the region, and goes through all possible shades from long and very open to long-close. Local dialects, the lack of sufficient orthographic signs, and the often unreasonable corrections of teachers, lead to extremes. The exact shades are found only in Paris, where the language is learned not from books, but by ear, and where the influence of teaching is almost *nil*.

The shades of *o* are hardly less numerous and hard to keep track of. Long *o* is pronounced close in the east when final, but when followed by a consonant it is often open when in Paris it would be close. Thus at Verdun, in the northeast, and at Bordeaux in the southwest, *chose*, *autre*, which should have the close *o* sound, are pronounced *chòse*, *òtre*.

Final short *o* is close in Paris (*gigót*), but open at Angoulême and Bordeaux (*gigòt*). The *o* of *émotion* is close in Paris, but

<sup>10</sup> "Théoduline," poème valaisan, in *Collection des poètes français de l'étranger*, edited by Georges Barral. Paris: Fischbacher, 1906.

open at Angoulême. *Octobre* is pronounced octób're in the department of Haute Marne: *école* becomes *écòle* at Zordeaux, Agen, and other southern towns.

Open *o* is lacking in certain regions, where it is hardly distinguished from *ê*, *corps* being pronounced almost like *cœur*. Some pronounce pretonic *o* like a species of mute *e* or *æ*: *moment* becoming *mæment*; this is common in Paris.

Let us now consider a few of the digraphs, and first *ai*.

The present *j'ai*, the perfect in *ai*, the future first person should be pronounced with close *e* sound, according to the orthoëpists. But in many regions even cultured Frenchmen use open *e* in all such cases, the perfect having, however, more generally the close sound. The same remark applies to the adjective *gai* and the verb forms *je sais, tu sais, il sait*, pronounced with close *e* in Montpellier, Bordeaux, Paris, Amiens, but with open *e* in Geneva, Lyons, Tours, Paris (popularly), and Caen.

In Geneva, Lyons, Marseille, Amiens, and Belgium one often hears the present participle of *faire* and the tenses formed from the present participle pronounced *fèsant, fèsais*, etc. This is a survival of an older stage of the language.

The digraph *oi* is variously pronounced. Rousselot represents it phonetically *wa* (with medium *a*) or *wà* (open *a*). But he remarks that old people and provincials frequently pronounce *bwát* (*boîte*), *crwáz* (*croise*), *parwás* (*paroisse*). In Paris, people of sixty, and young people who have been under their influence, use this pronunciation; people of forty-five say *bwât, crwâz, parwās*; while young people generally use an open *a* and pronounce *crwàz, parwàs*, the evolution being from close to open *a* tending toward *e*. At the same time, in many parts of France we hear *wè* for this digraph—an old pronunciation to which the modern Paris custom evinces a tendency to revert. Again, many Frenchmen pronounce *oa* instead of *wa*. The best speakers use the two forms apparently in the same breath.

It is an eastern habit to pronounce close *â* in words like *aveugle, jeune, neuve, fleuve*, etc. It is met with pretty generally around Geneva, Lyons, and sporadically in Paris, even among cultured people.

Rousselot says that in the neighborhood of Liège *puis* is pronounced *pwi*. He might have made his remark more general, for such is the pronunciation of *ui* all over Belgium; even in Paris *jw-in* (*juin*) is heard in the same breath with the correct *jü-in*.

*Quintuple* and *quiétisme* were pronounced *qu-intuple* and *qu-iétisme* by eight people out of ten questioned by Rousselot, while two said *kintuple*, *kiétism*; five said *équ-estre*, *équ-itation*, and five, *ékestre*, *ékitation*; seven said *aigu-ille*, three *aigh-ille*; one said *aigu-iser*, nine *aighiser*; two *Gu-ise*, eight *Ghise*; four *Gui-yo* (*Guiot*), two *Ghi-yo*, and four *Gü-yo*.

In *extinguible* the *u* should be heard, according to the Academy and to Littré, but Koschwitz heard only *extinghibile* both in Paris and in Lyons. As to *équestre* the orthoepists are fairly unanimous in prescribing a pronunciation with *u*, yet *ékestre* seems to be the only pronunciation heard by Koschwitz from Marseille to the north, including Switzerland, but we saw above that Rousselot's witnesses were evenly divided. Conclusion: The tendency is manifestly to eliminate the *u* element from all such combinations, and, if it persists, it is due only to orthography. Even in the combination *qua* the same law is at work and *loquace* is pronounced *lokas* more often than *lokwas*.

In the south of France the nasal vowel is seldom heard alone, there being always a vague *m* or *n* present; thus *ãjã* is pronounced *ãnjã*; *vẽ*, *vẽn*; etc. In the north *ã* tends to pass into *õ* and, vice versa, *õ* into *ã*, a frequent occurrence in Paris. In Paris and in the provinces the indefinite article *un* often becomes *ẽ*; this is especially common among Walloons. The careless pronunciation of *bien* as *bẽ* is common in France and Belgium, but it is not to be recommended.

The best discussion of the sounds of *r* is found in Beyer's *Französische Phonetik*.<sup>10</sup> In France, as in Germany, Belgium, and Holland, the lingual and the uvular *r* are met with; in Paris the latter is the only one considered fashionable at the present time, the lingual *r* being considered provincial. Yet on the stage and for singing purposes the rolled *r* is the only one taught. In the provinces the lingual *r* is still faithfully adhered to. The

<sup>10</sup> Cöthen, 1897.

matter might be roughly summed up as follows: Lingual *r* practically general among country people and in small towns; uvular *r* in Paris and vicinity; hesitancy between lingual and uvular *r*, with an increasing tendency toward the uvular, in cities outside of Paris.

Paul Passy remarks that at a congress of elementary teachers held in Paris in 1887, at which were present 2,400 teachers from all parts of France, three-fourths of the speakers used the lingual *r*. Among prominent people tested by Koschwitz for his *Parlers parisiens*, the following used lingual *r*: Zola, Edouard Rod, Gaston Paris, Ernest Renan, Charles Loyson (Père Hyacinthe), François Got, Henri de Bornier, François Coppée, Sully Prudhomme, Leconte de Lisle.

In the south of France the lingual *r* is strongly rolled, especially in words where it is written double. In Belgium the lingual *r* is natural to most people, although in the cities the uvular is spreading under Parisian influence.

Which *r* shall we adopt? If the Parisian standard of pronunciation is to be our supreme law, then let it by all means be the uvular *r*, provided we succeed in pronouncing it perfectly; but, as Rousselot says, in the mouth of the true child of Paris it is very sweet sounding, while the imitation of it is often disagreeable. If the student has naturally a good lingual *r*, it might be just as well to let him stick to that. My experience is that to English-speaking students the lingual *r* offers less difficulty than the uvular.

The so-called *l mouillée* has practically disappeared from normal French. It is heard only under dialectic influence in Switzerland, in the extreme south—at Marseille, for instance—and in the extreme north—in Belgium. We know that Littré severely condemned the modern pronunciation of *l mouillée* as a *yod*. His protestations have been of no avail.

Owing to the orthoepists, there is a good deal of hesitancy about the pronunciation of the words *scintiller* and *vaciller*. The tendency is everywhere and among all classes to say *scinti-yé* and *vaci-yé*, in spite of the dictionaries, which demand generally *scintiler* and *vaciler*. The same hesitancy exists in the case of

*osciller*, although *osciler* seems to be still more used than *osci-yer*.

Aspirate *h* does not exist in modern French pronunciation, at least not admittedly; its only function is that of preventing elision in certain cases. Yet sometimes in an emphatic utterance, it is heard even in Paris. In certain provinces it is still quite common, in spite of the rule that it should never be heard; thus in Brittany, Lorraine, Gascony, Bearn, and throughout Belgium.

The *ch* in words like *Machiavel*, *archiépiscopal* is by some pronounced like *k*, by others like *sh*; no rule can consistently be laid down in the presence of the unstable usage that prevails.

The letter *p* is pronounced by some and omitted by others in words like *sculpter* and *dompter*.

*X* is pronounced *ks* and *s* in *Auxerre* and *auxerrois*, *Bruxelles* and *bruxellois*. However, in Belgium *s* is exclusively used for the last two. Koschwitz was misinformed when he wrote that *Bruxelles* is pronounced *Bruksel* in Belgium.

Although the foregoing remarks can lay no claim to completeness, enough has been said to show that the pronunciation of French is far from being uniform in France and even in Paris. The only place where uniformity may be said to exist is the stage, and even there keen listeners might detect small differences from actor to actor. We know, moreover, that the quality of vowels does change slightly with the nature of the utterance, which may be lofty or trivial, emphatic, passionate, etc., and with the position—stressed or unstressed—of the word or the syllable in which it occurs.

Good usage should be our guide—that goes without saying; but it must be borne in mind that absolute good usage is nowhere to be found; nor is this absolutely necessary. The ordinary conversation of Parisians of a fair amount of culture is good enough to serve as a model to foreigners. We may fully indorse Rousselet's words: "It is obvious that what (in matters of pronunciation) is not displeasing to the educated Frenchman cannot be offensive to foreigners. Here too much purism is out of place. What is most important to a foreigner is to get rid of his nationalisms, and in that he cannot be too careful."